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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to provide information concerning the academic performance of students who were permitted to continue on probation while hovering slightly below university requirements. The sample consisted of 212 academically dismissed students who were readmitted to the College of Education at Kent State University. The results show that the persistent probationer tends to be on probation longer than the mean number of quarters before dismissal (2.2 quarters) and after readmission (1.9 quarters). He tends to be an upperclassman, to earn a cummulative GPA higher than the mean for the sample, and he tends to graduate. Using graduation as the major factor of success for readmission, the results imply that the persistent probationer has a tendency to be a successful readmitted student. (Author/AF)

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ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE "PERSISTENT PROBATIONER" COLLEGE STUDENT

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INTRODUCTION

The question of whether to carry a student on academic probation who hovers slightly below university academic requirements, the persistent probationer, or to dismiss him perplexes many educators. When the student has been academically dismissed and granted readmission, the problem of evaluating his academic performance the returning semester becomes even more difficult if his performance is marginal. Hence, this study considers the behavior of the persistent probationer after readmission.

METHODOLOGY

In a large study which attempted to identify factors of success of academically dismissed students upon readmission, the sample of readmitted students contained a group of "persistent probationers", students who through administrative decisions were permitted to continue on probation while hovering slightly below university requirements rather than being dismissed.

Nineteen variables were collected from a sample of 212 academically dismissed students who were readmitted to the College of Education from 1961 through 1963. The time lapse

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between these readmission dates and the present was necessary to study the progress of the students. Nine of the variables were academic performance variables and were associated with the persistent probationer phenomenon. The 19 variables were coded for computer input and a missing variable correlation was processed on the sample data.

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Insert TABLE 1 & 2 about here

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RESULTS

A list of the nine variables and their descriptions is found in Table 1. Table 2 is a list of correlations which, in combination, give a complete description of the persistent probationer. The variables are listed as having dependent or independent functional relationships.

The first correlation listed, .135, represents an important facet of the persistent probationer phenomenon. The variables involved, graduate and dismissal probation, are independent and correlate significantly to indicate that students on probation for a length of time longer than the mean (2.2 probation quarters before dismissal) tend to graduate. This implies that the persistent probationer has a tendency to be a successful readmitted student.

The longer a student remains on probation before dismissal the higher his g.p.a. tends to be when he is dismissed. Although the variables correlated here, dismissal g.p.a. and dismissal probation (.429) are dependent, the

correlation remains as part of the persistent probationer phenomenon.

Another correlation, readmission g.p.a. with dismissal probation (.142) typifies the persistent probationer. The correlation of these independent variables indicates that students on probation longer than the mean number of quarters before dismissal (2.2 quarters) tend to return to earn a high readmission g.p.a. Readmission g.p.a. correlates with readmission probation (.319) and describes the same phenomenon. The persistent probationer is on probation longer than the mean (1.9 quarters) after readmission and tends to earn a high readmission g.p.a. The students who are academically dismissed again after readmission do not accumulate probation quarters. But, students with high probation grades are carried longer. Both variables, dismissal probation and readmission probation, correlate with cumulative g.p.a. (.335 and .287). These two correlations indicate that the persistent probationer tends to have a cumulative g.p.a. which is higher than the mean (1.69).

Another correlation related to this phenomenon is .306, dismissal probation with prescription g.p.a. The longer a student is on probation before dismissal, the higher his prescription g.p.a. tends to be. This reflects his high dismissal g.p.a.

Dismissal probation correlated with dismissal hours and cumulative hours (.473 and .297), and cumulative hours with readmission probation (.296), also add to the description of

the persistent probationer. Students with a high total number of credit hours tend to be on probation longer than the mean. The mean number of dismissal hours (58.5) and the mean number of cumulative hours (98.5) indicates that the persistent probationer tends to be an upperclassman.

The correlation of dismissal probation and readmission probation (.137) completes the description of the persistent probationer. The student who was on probation many quarters (more than 2.2) before dismissal tends to be on probation after readmission longer than the mean (1.9 quarters). The persistent probationer has a perpetual academic record of probation quarters.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to provide information concerning the academic performance of students who through administrative decisions were permitted to continue on probation while hovering slightly below university requirements rather than being dismissed. The sample consisted of 212 academically dismissed students who were readmitted to the College of Education at Kent State University.

The results show that the persistent probationer tends to be on probation longer than the mean number of quarters before dismissal (2.2 quarters) and after readmission (1.9 quarters). He tends to be an upperclassman, to earn a cumulative g.p.a. higher than the mean for the sample, and he tends to graduate.

In conclusion, using graduating as the major factor of success for readmission, the results imply that the persistent probationer has a tendency to be a successful readmitted student. If the university objective is to maximize the education of every student, then it will provide the opportunity to the persistent probationer to continue.

TABLE 1

Nine Variables Associated with the Persistent Probationer Phenomenon

Continuous Variable	Description
1. Dismissal g.p.a.--grade point average at the time of dismissal	
2. Readmission g.p.a--grade point average earned during the first quarter of readmission	
3. Cumulative g.p.a.--most recent grade point average	
4. Prescription g.p.a.--grade point average prescribed for first quarter of readmission	
5. Dismissal hours--total number of credit hours at the time of dismissal	
6. Cumulative hours--total number of credit hours	
7. Dismissal probation--number of quarters on probation before dismissal	
8. Readmission probation--number of quarters on probation after readmission	
9. Graduate--a graduate of Kent State University	

TABLE 2

Persistent Probationer Correlations

Correlation		Combination of variables	Relationship
.135*	1/9	graduate/dismissal probation	I
.429***	3/9	dismissal g.p.a./dismissal probation	D
.142*	4/9	readmission g.p.a./dismissal probation	I
.319***	4/10	readmission g.p.a./readmission probation	D
.335***	5/9	cumulative g.p.a./dismissal probation	D
.287***	5/10	cumulative g.p.a./readmission probation	D
.306***	6/9	prescription g.p.a./dismissal probation	I
.473***	7/9	dismissal hours/dismissal probation	D
.297***	8/9	cumulative hours/dismissal probation	I
.296***	8/10	cumulative hours/readmission probation	I
.137*	9/10	dismissal probation/readmission probation	I

Note: "I" is an abbreviation for independent, "D" for dependent
***p <.001 (.228)
**p < .01 (.175)
*p < .05 (.134)